

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01958 021330Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11
OES-07 SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 PA-01
/152 W

-----129897 021342Z /64

R 020949Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8230
INFO AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1958

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRN, ENRG, PBOR, UR, YS, ET
SUBJ: ETHIOPIAN PETROLEUM SITUATION

REF: STATE 054992

1. SUMMARY. PMGSE HOLDS EMERGENCY MEETINGS OVER SERIOUS
PETROLEUM SHORTAGE. PROBLEM CONTINUING ONE OF SHORTAGES
OF STORAGE CAPACITY AND TRANSPORTATION, AUGMENTED BY POOR
DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING WEEK OF APRIL 24 PMGSE HELD SERIES EMERGENCY
MEETINGS TO DISCUSS CURRENT FUEL PROBLEMS AND HOW TO OVERCOME
THEM. LONG TERM PROBLEM OF LCAK OF TRANSPORTS HAS NOT BEEN
ALLEVIATED NOR HAS STORAGE CAPACITY APPRECIABLY INCREASED.
ATTEMPTS TO INCREASE TRUCK/TANKER TURNAROUND BY UTILIZING
RAIL TRANSPORT FROM AWASH TO ADDIS ABABA BACKFIRED AND ADDIS
ABABA IS PRESENTLY CRITICALLY SHORT OF GAS/OIL (DIESEL).
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AS A RESULT, THE LOCAL CEMENT PLANT, AMONG OTHERS, HAS HAD
TO TEMPORARILY CURTAIL OPERATIONS DUE TO LACK OF FUEL. ON
THE OTHER HAND, JET FUEL AND AVGAS STORAGE IN ADDIS IS
"TOPPED UP", AND SOME TANKERS CARRYING THESE PRODUCTS NOW
STAND IDLE, WAITING TO OFFLOAD.

3. IN EFFORT TO OVERCOME CURRENT DIFFICULTIES, ATTEMPTS TO

INCORPORATE RAILROAD INTO FUEL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY DISCONTINUED. TO FURTHER OVERCOME PRESENT CRITICAL GAS/OIL SHORTAGE, IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT SOVIET PLANES FLY INTO ADDIS DAILY SOME 80-90,000 LITERS OF JET FULE AND AVGAS FROM ADEN. THIS WOULD RELEASE SOME SIXTY TRUCK/TANKERS TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF GAS/OIL BEING FERRIED TO THE CAPITAL FROM ASSAB. (ALTHOUGH NOT YET CONFIRMED, IT APPEARS THIS SOVIET AIRLIFT MAY ACTUALLY BE IMPLEMENTED.)

4. KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES INDICATE TOTAL JET FUEL AND AVGAS CONSUMPTION AT ADDIS ABABA HAS BEEN APPROXIMATELY 5 MILLION LITERS PER MONTH IN 1978 (6.4 IN JAN, 3.9 IN FEB, AND 5.3 IN MARCH; TOTAL, 15.7 MILLION LITERS). TOTAL CONSUMPTION THROUGHOUT ETHIOPIA HAS BEEN 24.3 MILLION LITERS; 9.5 IN JAN, 7.0 IN FEB, AND 7.7 IN MARCH. THESE FIGURES DO NOT INCLUDE LARGE QUANTITIES BROUGHT INTO THE COUNTRY FROM ABROAD ON RETURNING ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES' PLANES. THESE COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS ARE UNDER STANDING ORDERS TO "TOP UP", WHENEVER POSSIBLE, AT THEIR LAST STOP BEFORE REENTERING ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY. ALTHOUGH THESE FIGURES REPRESENT ONLY USAGE BY NON-MILITARY AIRCRAFT, FREQUENTLY COMMERCIAL PLANES ARE USED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES.

5. A NEW DEVELOPMENT WHICH SHOULD MAKE A SMALL CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVING ETHIOPIA'S PETROLEUM PROBLEMS IS THAT PRIVATE OIL COMPANIES SERVING ETHIOPIA AGAIN ARE BEING PERMITTED TO

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ON-LOAD PRODUCT AT DJIBOUTI. THIS PERMISSION HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN BY DJIBOUTI AUTHORITIES LATE IN 1977.

6. ALTHOUGH CONDITIONS IN ERITREA (OUTSIDE OF ASSAB AND MASAWA) HAVE GENERALLY BEEN IGNORED IN VIEWING ETHIOPIA'S PETROLEUM SITUATION, A RECENT REPORT BY IMPARTIAL SOURCES GIVES A GOOD VIEW OF THE SERIOUS SITUATION IN ASMARA. ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, IN THE ERITREAN CAPITAL, THERE IS ELECTRIC POWER ONLY FOR BRIEF PERIODS SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH DUE TO THE VIRTUAL NON-EXISTENCE OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. AS A CONSEQUENCE, INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY HAS COME TO A COMPLETE STANDSTILL, "NIGHT SCHOOL" IS NOW HELD EARLY IN THE MORNING BEFORE REGULAR CLASSES BEGIN, WATER IS BOUGHT IN THE STREETS (AT EXORBITANT PRICES), AND TRANSPORTATION IS BY HORSE OF FOOT. WHAT ACTIVITY THERE IS, IS REGULATED BY THE HOURS OF DAYLIGHT.

MATHERON

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM, RESERVE SHORTAGE, JET FUEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ADDIS01958
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780186-1041
Format: TEL
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197805104/aaaadkrs.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5698a494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 54992
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2525879
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ETHIOPIAN PETROLEUM SITUATION
TAGS: ETRN, ENRG, PBOR, UR, YS, ET
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5698a494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014